P.S. 10/9/65

# Revolutionary's Requiem

Fidel Castro's recitation of a letter of resignation allegedly written by Ernesto (Ché) Guevara only adds to the mystery of the whereabouts of this former lieutenant of the Cuban dictator. Castro explained that Guevara, who has not been seen publicly since March, had relinquished his adopted Cuban citizenship and gone off seeking new revolutions to conquer. There is a hint, however, that the departure of the fiery Argentine-born physician-revolutionary (if in fact he has left Cuba) came about because of ideological differences.

Guevara, whose economic stewardship produced near-disaster in Cuba, is associated with the promotion of violent revolution. He peddled this line during his Afro-Asian tour last winter, arousing some interest on the part of the Chinese and others including Latin American revolutionary groups in the abortive Afro-Asian conference. But his views brought sharp attacks from Eastern Europe, particularly from the Yugoslavs, who have tended to look upon the Cuban ideologues as a bunch of incurable romantics anyhow.

There is some reason to think that the Soviet Union, which has been supplying most of the help to Cuba, has been pressing Castro to moderate his course. This could be a reflection of the Sino-Soviet split; it also could be an effort to avoid overly arousing the United States. An appearance of moderation for public relations reasons would not necessarily affect Castro's clandestine activities abroad.

Most American experts discount the rumor that Guevara was killed in the Dominican insurrection. Earlier this year, however, he told the United Nations General Assembly that Cuba was openly supporting revolutionary movements in Guatemala, Colombia and Venezuela. Castro's explanation thus could be a cover to dissociate Cuba from responsibility for Guevara's role. Or he could be promoting the Chinese line in Vietnam or the Congo. Revolutionaries of his stripe seldom change their outlook, and doubtless he is fomenting trouble for the established order wherever he is.